



LESSON 3  
**THE CRUCIFIXION**

**LESSON AT A GLANCE**

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Showed His Love by Dying for Us

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 27

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Jesus is crucified on a cross to defeat sin and fix the relationship between people and God. His sacrifice demonstrates His amazing love for us!

**WORD OF WONDER:** When anyone lives in Christ, the new creation has come. The old is gone! The new is here! —2 Corinthians 5:17

**CURIOSITY 15 minutes • Large Group or Small Group**

Hands-on activities to spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God

- Welcome Question: How would you fill in the blank? I love \_\_\_\_\_ so much!
- Curiosity Questions
- Elementary Interactive Game: Who Loves What?
- Preteen Multisensory Activity: One Word Love
- Declaring God's Wonder



**BELIEF 25–35 minutes • Large Group**

An interactive dive into Scripture that guides kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder

- Prayer of Invitation and Worship
- God's Big Story: Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- In Awe of God's Wonder

**FAITH 15 minutes • Small Group**

An intentional conversation that helps kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own

- Word of Wonder Activity
- Discussion Questions for Elementary Kids and Preteens
- Small Group Prayer Time

**IDENTITY 10 minutes • Large Group or Small Group**

An interactive worship response activity that creates space for God to remind kids that they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder

- Elementary Responding in Worship: Rock Art Remembering
- Preteen Responding in Worship: Tearing the Curtain
- Blessing Your Kids

**Wonder@Home™**

Designed for families to engage in the wonder of God together at home. This resource includes a video, worship playlists, activities, and more!

### INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Showed His Love by Dying for Us

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 27

**WORD OF WONDER:** 2 Corinthians 5:17

Have you ever been wrongfully accused? Perhaps someone spread false gossip about you, or maybe someone took something you said out of context.

When living in a fallen world of nearly eight billion imperfect humans, we're bound to face difficult things and difficult people. It's easy to develop a jaded view of humanity. And no one understands the imperfection of humans better than God, yet still He loves us.

Take some time to read Matthew 27:32–56.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus chose to die such an excruciating death? He had every right to show His power and put humans in their rightful place. Yet He chose to submit himself, facing the humiliation of being put on trial. Even the earthly authorities couldn't find anything illegal or evil about Him. He was innocent, yet His love for us is so great that He chose to die on the cross. Jesus showed His love by dying for us.

Does knowing what Jesus did for us give you the strength to face the evil in the world? Take some time to dwell in God's wonderful love. May it inspire you to show grace to those who might not deserve it but need it.

—Catherine Hwang-Jin

Children's Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

The climax (and turning point) of God's big story is the death and resurrection of Jesus, God's Son. Jesus became nothing and took on the nature of a servant, humbling Himself to death on a cross (Philippians 2:6–8).

**WHAT?**

Crucifixion was a horrible and painful process—a form of slow torture as the recipient suffocated to death. Jesus willingly went to the cross, submitting Himself to “the joy set before Him” as He endured the cross, so we could be restored to right relationship with God (Hebrews 12:2 NIV).

**WHERE?**

The crucifixion of Jesus took place outside the city gates of Jerusalem on a hill called Golgotha. Jesus would have been exposed up on that hill as He suffered. Jews from all over would have been in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover.

**WHEN?**

It is no coincidence that Jesus died at Passover—the time when all of God's people remembered God's salvation in the Exodus. Jesus died as a sacrificial lamb, ushering in a new and better exodus event: freedom from our slavery to sin and death.

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:**

Jesus died to fix the relationship between God and people, making the way for us to be with God. Jesus fulfills the promise God made after the first sin in Genesis 3, reversing the curse of sin. Jesus is the only One who can defeat sin and death!

### LESSON 3 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Large Group or Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

#### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Showed His Love by Dying for Us

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 27

**WORD OF WONDER:** 2 Corinthians 5:17

#### Series Bumper and Countdown Videos

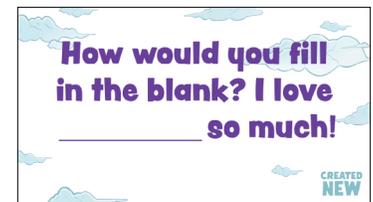
Choose between the [Created New Series Bumper Video](#) and [Countdown Videos](#) to introduce the kids to the series.

#### Welcome Question

**SUPPLIES:** paper, coloring utensils, whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Crucifixion Welcome Question Slide

Before kids arrive, display The Crucifixion Welcome Question Slide or write the following question on a whiteboard: "How would you fill in the blank? I love \_\_\_\_\_ so much!" Set out paper and coloring utensils.



#### As kids arrive ...

Welcome kids by name, if possible, and invite them to answer the Welcome Question on the board. Consider inviting kids who would like to draw pictures of things or people they love to draw on the whiteboard or on paper. Encourage everyone to share their answers with two or three others. For younger kids, read the question aloud and give them a few ideas of your own to help them get started.

#### At your start time ...

Welcome the whole group and let them know you're happy they're here! Ask if anyone would like to share their answer to the question: **How would you fill in the blank? I love \_\_\_\_\_ so much!** Instead of asking kids to raise their hands to volunteer, consider telling them to look at you and make a funny face if they want to share!

**It's so good to hear all the things and people you love so much! If we asked Jesus to answer our Welcome Question, how do you think He'd answer? Listen to kids' answers. Those are great ideas! I think Jesus would write each of our names in the blank because He loves each of us so much! Today we're going to hear about what Jesus was willing to do all because He loves us. But first, it's time to be curious!**

## Curiosity Questions

Ask the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious ...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one.

I’m curious ...

- What do you think the word **love** means?
- What do you think the word **relationship** means? Who are some people you have relationships with?

**Leader Tip:** Consider introducing this definition for love: Love is not just a feeling but selfless actions that put others before ourselves. Love is who God is. As Jesus followers, we can be filled with God’s love so that Christlike love becomes what describes us best!

## Elementary Interactive Game: Who Loves What?

**SUPPLIES:** writing utensils (1 per kid)

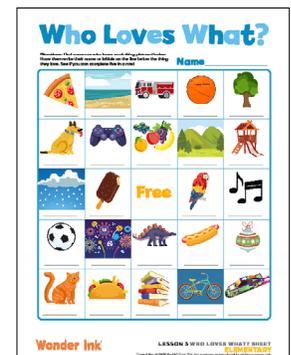
**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Who Loves What? Sheet (1 per kid), Who Loves What? Slide, Crucifixion Wonder Truth Slide

Ahead of time, print a copy of the Who Loves What? Sheet for each kid.

Display the Who Loves What? Slide and gather the kids.

**In the English language, the word *love* can mean many different things. You may love ice cream, and you may love your baby brother, but hopefully you don’t love them the same way! Let’s have a little fun finding out about the things each of us loves in the “ice cream” way!**

Give a Who Loves What? Sheet and a writing utensil to each kid. Invite them to write their names on the line at the top of the page. Explain to kids that their goal is to find people who love the things pictured on their sheets and to have them write their first name (or their initials) on the line directly below the thing they love. Their goal is to fill out five boxes in a row!

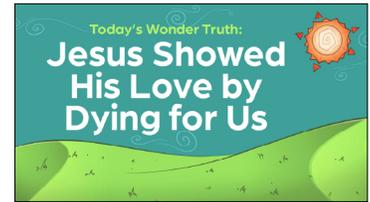


**Leader Tip:** The specific rules of the game will depend on the size of your group. If your group is large, consider requiring kids to find a different person to sign each box. If your group is small, consider allowing kids to have the same person sign 2–3 or more boxes.

**Make It Inclusive:** If any kids struggle to write their names, encourage them to write just one letter or another symbol (such as an “X”) to represent their name. Or consider pairing kids up and having them work together to fill out one Who Loves What? Sheet.

Give kids time to find people who love the different items on their sheets. If you want to structure the activity as a competition, then the first person to get five boxes in a row filled out wins! Otherwise, give all the kids several minutes to fill out their sheets. If time allows, challenge kids to fill out all their boxes! Participate alongside the kids with your own copy of the Who Loves What? Sheet!

After a few minutes, gather the kids together and invite them to hold up their sheets for everyone to see. **I love hearing about all the different things each of you loves! We often use the word love to describe how we feel about something or someone. But God’s love is more than a feeling. God’s love is shown through selfless actions that put others before ourselves. No one understood this better than Jesus, who showed us His love in a very powerful way.** Display the Crucifixion Wonder Truth Slide. **Our Wonder Truth today is JESUS SHOWED HIS LOVE BY DYING FOR US.**



## Preteen Multisensory Activity: One Word Love

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** One Word Love Slide, “Your Love Never Fails” from the [Created New Elementary Spotify playlist](#), Crucifixion Wonder Truth Slide

Display the One Word Love Slide. **In the English language, the word love can mean many different things. In its original languages, the Bible uses different words for different types of love. God loves you! And the love He has for you is steadfast, which means it never changes. God’s love is more than a feeling. God’s love is shown through selfless actions that put others before ourselves. Let’s do an activity that lets us use words to express love and encouragement for others.**



Help kids form two circles, one inside the other and each with the same number of people in it. The kids in the outside circle can face those in the inside and vice versa. The person they are facing is their partner.

**When the music plays, everyone on the inside will turn to their left and walk in a circle.** Join the inside circle and demonstrate walking in a circle to the left. **Everyone on the outside will turn to their left and walk in a circle.** Join the outside circle and demonstrate walking in a circle to the left. (Because the two circles are facing each other, their “lefts” are different, and the two circles will move in opposite directions.) **When the music stops, you’ll stop where you are and face your new partner. Encouraging one another is a way we can show love, and you’ll encourage your partner with just one word. You can say something positive you’ve noticed about your partner, even if you don’t know her well. For example, if you’ve noticed her being kind to others, you might say “kind” as your one word.**

**Start the music as two circles of kids begin moving.** Consider playing “Your Love Never Fails” from the [Created New Elementary Spotify playlist](#). After 10–15 seconds, stop the music. Encourage kids to face their new partners and say just one word of love and encouragement.

Start the music again and repeat the process several times, giving kids a chance to encourage different partners each time.

Gather the kids together and display the Crucifixion Wonder Truth Slide. **What are some of the words your partners used to encourage you? Allow kids to share freely. One way we can show love is through our words. And the words you used were very encouraging! Our actions are another powerful way to show someone you love them. Jesus**



understood this! And He showed us His love in the most powerful way imaginable. Our Wonder Truth today is **JESUS SHOWED HIS LOVE BY DYING FOR US.**

## Declaring God's Wonder

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Crucifixion Declaration Slide

Display the Crucifixion Declaration Slide. Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

**Thank You, God, that You are good!** (Kids repeat.)

**You made me on purpose, for a purpose.** (Kids repeat.)

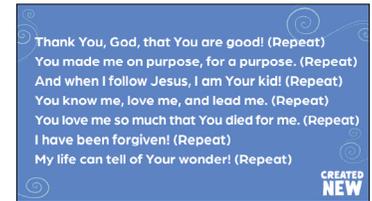
**And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat.)

**You know me, love me, and lead me.** (Kids repeat.)

**You love me so much that You died for me.** (Kids repeat.)

**I have been forgiven!** (Kids repeat.)

**My life can tell of Your wonder!** (Kids repeat.)



## LESSON 3 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

### Large Group

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Showed His Love by Dying for Us

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 27

**WORD OF WONDER:** 2 Corinthians 5:17

### Prayer of Invitation

Lead kids in a prayer of invitation before entering into worship and God's big story: **God, thank You for loving us with a big, unchanging, everlasting love! Help us to hear the truth of Your Word today with our ears and with our hearts. Thank You most of all for Jesus, who loves us so much He was willing to die for us. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

### Worship

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** songs from the [Created New Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

**Let's praise God together and thank Him for His never-ending love.** Play songs from the [Created New Elementary Spotify playlist](#) and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

### God's Big Story

#### Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story—each one reinforces the others! **HEAR** it read directly from the Bible. **WATCH** it in a video. **EXPERIENCE** it through the live script.



**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid)

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Crucifixion Title Slide, [The Crucifixion God's Big Story Video](#)

Display the Crucifixion Title Slide. Explain to your kids that this part of God's big story can be read about in all four of the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—but today we'll be reading from the book of Matthew. Matthew is the first book in the New Testament.

**Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll watch and experience more of the story!**

**Leader Tip:** Scriptural accounts of the crucifixion are difficult and intense. Review the passage ahead of time to determine whether reading the whole passage aloud or just parts of it is best for the kids and families in your ministry.

Ask the kids to close their eyes while reading out Matthew 27:32–45, 50. Then do one or both of the following:

- Use the following The Crucifixion Experience It! Script
- View [The Crucifixion God's Big Story Video](#)

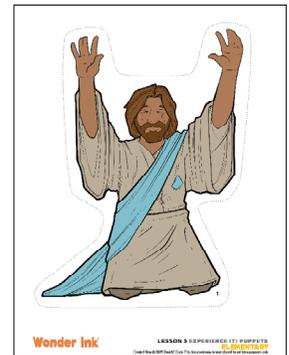
## LESSON 3 THE CRUCIFIXION EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

**SUPPLIES:** white cardstock, scissors (prep only), roll of adhesive magnet material, magnetic whiteboard, dry-erase markers, black sheer fabric (1 yard), magnetic sheet pan (optional)

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Experience It! Puppets Full Page or Small Version (1 set)

**Make It Inclusive:** The Experience It! Script covers the difficult story of Jesus' crucifixion. Kids who have experienced trauma (or those who are very young) may struggle with the details. Be aware of the needs of your kids when deciding how much of the story to share.

Before kids arrive, print the Experience It! Puppets Full Page or Small Version on white cardstock and cut them out. Attach a large enough piece of adhesive magnet to the back of each puppet so the puppets stick to the surface of the magnetic whiteboard. Use dry-erase markers to draw trees on the whiteboard to indicate a garden. If you don't have a magnetic whiteboard, use a sheet pan instead and use the Experience It! Puppets Small Version. Before beginning, check to see if one side of the pan is more receptive to a dry-erase marker. Check that the sheet pan is magnetic. Arrange your puppets within easy reach and in order (the number at the bottom of each puppet indicates order of use).



**The time had finally arrived. The rescue plan God had hinted at with Adam and Eve in the garden had reached its most important moment. For three years, Jesus—the Rescuer—had been teaching and healing and showing people God's kingdom. And now, after sharing a final meal with His disciples, Jesus (place puppet 1 in middle of the garden) spent the night praying in a garden for strength because He knew that He must die for the sake of human beings. People do so many wrong and evil things called sins, and these sins separate people from God. To fix the broken relationship between humans and God, Jesus needed to die to defeat sin.**

**One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, betrayed Jesus and led the religious authorities and their armed guards to Jesus to arrest Him. Place puppet 2 in garden. Rather than fight the guards, Jesus went with them willingly, knowing that He would die.**

If using a whiteboard, stand in front of it for the explanation of the trials. If using a sheet pan, put it down and explain the trials. **Jesus was put on trial two times, yet the authorities could not find anything illegal or evil about His actions. Even still, the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, handed Jesus over to his soldiers to be beaten and nailed to a cross outside the city. This was called crucifixion, and it was a slow and painful way to die.**

The instructions for these puppets appear in the next paragraph.

**After Jesus had been beaten, He was forced to carry His heavy cross until He couldn't anymore, and the soldiers asked someone else in the crowd to do it. They arrived at a place called Golgotha,**

which means “the Place of the Skull” (Matthew 27:33). Place the first cross (puppet 3) in the center of the whiteboard or sheet pan. **There the soldiers crucified Him, along with two men who had rebelled against the Roman rulers, one on each side of Jesus.** Place the next two crosses (puppets 4 and 5) on each side of the cross in the center.

**The soldiers began mocking Jesus. They posted a sign above Jesus’ head that said, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews” (Matthew 27:37).** Place the sign (puppet 6) above the cross in the center. **The Roman rulers didn’t like when the people they ruled claimed to be kings. Even though Jesus did not call Himself a king, His disciples and other followers did, and as God’s own Son, Jesus is King over the whole world.**

**The religious leaders and people passing by on the road also made fun of Jesus, telling Him to come down from the cross if He really was God’s Son. While Jesus could have called on God to save Him, He knew that God wanted Him to die for all people so that they could be forgiven of their sins and have a new and whole relationship with God. Jesus loves people so much that He chose to stay on the cross to bring them into a new life with God.**

**Suddenly, in the middle of the afternoon, the entire land was covered in darkness. Drape black sheer fabric over the whiteboard or sheet pan. Jesus looked up to the skies, cried out loudly, and breathed His last breath. At that moment, the curtain in the temple, the place people worshiped God, tore in two, and the earth shook. What the people watching on that dark afternoon didn’t realize was that this moment was not the end of the story. For three days later, Jesus would rise again, defeating sin and death.**

Stand in front of the whiteboard or sheet pan. **Imagine the kind of love it would take for someone to willingly die such a painful and embarrassing death. But Jesus knew that the only way to defeat sin and to heal our relationship with God was for Him to die for us. Jesus showed His love by dying for us.**

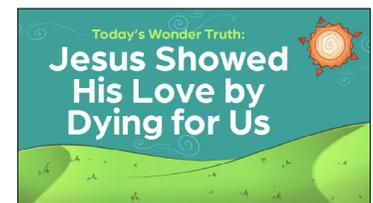
## Connecting the Wonder Truth

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Crucifixion Wonder Truth Slide

Display the Crucifixion Wonder Truth Slide.

**Our Wonder Truth today is JESUS SHOWED HIS LOVE BY DYING FOR US. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story?** Allow kids to answer freely.

**Jesus died to fix the relationship between God and people, making the way for us to be with God. Jesus fulfills the promise God made after the first sin in Genesis 3, reversing the curse of sin. Jesus is the only One who can defeat sin and death!**



## In Awe of God’s Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God’s story.

**What does this story show us about what God is like? Based on this story, how do you think God feels about you?** Allow kids a moment to process and discuss what they’re feeling.

**What do you wonder about in this story?** Allow kids time to think and share their answers. You might consider sharing an answer of your own!

## LESSON 3 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

### Small Group

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Showed His Love by Dying for Us

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 27

**WORD OF WONDER:** 2 Corinthians 5:17

### Word of Wonder Activity

#### WORD OF WONDER

When anyone lives in Christ, the new creation has come. The old is gone! The new is here!

—2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIRV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

—2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid), permanent marker (prep only), adhesive name tags or masking tape

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Word of Wonder Slide (optional), [Elementary Word of Wonder Video](#) (optional)

Ahead of time, split the Word of Wonder into as many parts as there are kids in each small group and use a permanent marker to write each part on an adhesive name tag or strip of masking tape. You'll need one verse set for each small group.

**Our Word of Wonder for the Created New series talks about being made new! Let's say the verse together.** Open your Bible to 2 Corinthians 5:17. If possible, display the Word of Wonder Slide or watch the [Elementary Word of Wonder Video](#). Lead the kids in reading the verse several times in unison.

For this activity, each kid will be given an adhesive name tag or strip of masking tape with one part of the Word of Wonder on it. There are multiple options for this activity. Choose the one that works best for the kids in your small group:

1. Each kid sticks their verse section to the front of their shirts. They work together to put themselves in verse order as quickly as possible. (This option works great with younger kids!)
2. With permission from each kid, the leader sticks one verse section to the back of each kid's shirt, so kids can't see it. Kids work together to put themselves in verse order. They're allowed to talk! (This option works great with middle elementary kids and groups with mixed ages.)
3. With permission from each kid, the leader sticks one verse section to the back of each kid's shirt, so kids can't see it. Kids work together to put themselves in order but are not allowed to talk! (This option works great with preteens.)

## Elementary Questions

- **When Jesus was arrested in the garden, how did He respond—did He fight or go willingly with the guards? What do you think this shows us about Jesus?** (*Jesus went willingly.*)
- **Jesus was put on trial two times. Did the trials show that Jesus was innocent (which means He didn't do anything against the law) or guilty (which means that He did)?** (*innocent*)
- **What happened to Jesus next, even though He was innocent?** (*He was crucified, which means He was hung on a wood cross and died.*)
- **Why do you think Jesus was willing to die?** (*Possible answer: Jesus loves all people—that means us too—and died to fix our relationship with God, which had been broken by sin—the wrong things we say and do.*)
- **How can you thank Jesus for His love and for dying on the cross?**
- **When Jesus died, it wasn't the end of the story! What happened three days later?** (*He rose from the dead and is alive!*)

Jesus made the decision to die on the cross because He loves us and knew that's what it would take for us to be able to know God as a friend. Let's talk with God in prayer and thank Him for Jesus' sacrifice!

## Preteen Questions

- **Did Jesus know ahead of time He would die for the sake of human beings? Why don't you think He tried to stop it?** (*Yes, Jesus knew He would die to fix the broken relationship between humans and God and to defeat sin.*)
- **What did the sign that was hung above Jesus' head say? What do you think is interesting about this sign?** (*"This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Jesus never called Himself a king, yet as God's own Son, Jesus actually is King over the whole world.*)
- **What does the word sacrifice mean to you? How are sacrifice and love connected?**
- **How do you think you would have reacted to seeing Jesus die on the cross?**
- **How can you thank Jesus for His love and for dying on the cross?**
- **When Jesus died, it wasn't the end of the story! What happened three days later?** (*He rose from the dead and is alive!*)

Jesus made the decision to die on the cross because He loves us and knew that's what it would take for us to be able to know God as a friend. Let's talk with God in prayer and thank Him for Jesus' sacrifice!

## Small Group Prayer Time

**SUPPLIES:** paper (1 sheet per kid), writing utensils (1 per kid)

Give each kid a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Invite them to write short notes to Jesus, thanking Him for His sacrifice. Kids may also write down any prayer requests they have on the back of their paper. Then pray together, giving kids an opportunity to speak their praises and requests aloud as prayers.

## LESSON 3 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

### Large Group or Small Group

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

#### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Showed His Love by Dying for Us

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 27

**WORD OF WONDER:** 2 Corinthians 5:17

### Elementary Responding in Worship: Rock Art Remembering

**SUPPLIES:** small rocks (1 per kid), paint pens/markers (1 per 2–3 kids), paintbrushes (1 per kid), red acrylic paint, wet wipes, disposable tablecloths (optional), hair dryer (optional), clear acrylic gloss (optional)

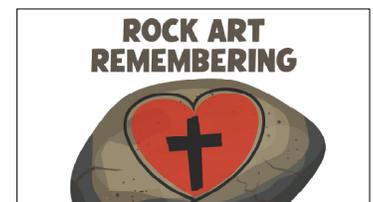
**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Rock Art Remembering Slide, “At the Cross (Love Ran Red)/The Cross Has the Final Word” from the [Created New Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, set up art stations where kids can paint their rocks. Consider covering tables with disposable tablecloths and set out small rocks (one per kid) and painting supplies. If possible, create a sample rock ahead of time.



**Leader Tip:** If you have a lot of younger kids or limited time for this activity, use a paint pen/marker to draw a heart on each of the rocks ahead of time. Kids will then use red paint to stamp their fingerprints inside their hearts and draw their own crosses over the hearts.

Display the Rock Art Remembering Slide and gather the kids. **Today we heard about how Jesus showed His love for us by dying on the cross. Let's create some rock art to help us remember that Jesus loves us so much that He sacrificed His own life so that we can be with God forever!** Invite kids to find a place at an art station and give a rock to each kid. Walk them through the process of creating their own rock art by explaining the following steps. If you created a sample ahead of time, show it to the kids.



1. With a paint pen/marker, draw a heart on the rock. (Skip this step if hearts were drawn on the rocks ahead of time.)
2. Use a paintbrush to paint red onto one of your fingers.
3. Use your painted finger like a stamp and stamp red inside the heart. Use a wet wipe to wipe finger clean.
4. Let the rock dry for several minutes. (If a hair dryer is available, have a leader hold the hair dryer

as kids take turns setting their rocks under the hair dryer for several seconds. The paint should dry quickly! Just be sure the hot air is aimed at rocks only—not at people or their fingers!)

5. Once the heart is dry, use a paint pen/marker to draw a cross on top of the heart.
6. If you have clear acrylic gloss, have an adult leader spray kids' finished rocks to seal them. (Do this somewhere away from the kids, such as outside or in another room.) The seal will weatherproof the rocks so that kids can set them outside.

Play music, such as “At the Cross (Love Ran Red)/The Cross Has the Final Word,” from the [Created New Elementary Spotify playlist](#) as kids paint their rocks. As kids create, invite them to think of ways Jesus has shown His love to them. Encourage them to share their thoughts with the kids near them.

**Make It Inclusive:** Some kids who have sensory sensitivities don't like painting on their fingers. As an alternative, invite them to create the heart using paint and a paintbrush, a paint pen, or a dot marker. Dot markers are good to have available for kids who have difficulty grasping thinner utensils.

When all the kids have finished, gather everyone and invite them to hold their painted rocks in front of them. **As you go home today, I encourage you to put your rocks somewhere that you'll see often, such as next to your bed or on the ground outside your front door** (if the rocks are sealed). **When you see the heart on your rock, remember that Jesus loves you! And when you see the cross, remember that Jesus showed His love for you by dying on the cross. Let's say our Wonder Truth together now: Jesus showed His love by dying for us!** Repeat the Wonder Truth several times together, getting louder each time.

## Preteen Responding in Worship: Tearing the Curtain

**SUPPLIES:** thin fabric swatches (1 per kid, purple or dark blue if possible), whiteboard, dry-erase marker, scissors (prep only; optional), cardstock (optional, half sheet per kid), fabric window curtain (optional)

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Tearing the Curtain Slide, “At the Cross (Love Ran Red)/The Cross Has the Final Word” from the [Created New Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

In this activity, kids will tear fabric swatches in half to represent the temple curtain tearing in two the day Jesus died. You'll need a swatch of fabric for each kid that is thin enough for them to tear in half. Consider cutting a tiny slit on one side of the fabric so kids can more easily tear the fabric in half. The size of the swatches isn't important as long as they can be easily torn. If possible, procure purple or dark blue swatches to resemble the colors of the temple curtain. As an alternative to fabric swatches, kids can tear half sheets of cardstock.

Ahead of time, write “The curtain is torn! Sin has lost its power! Because of Jesus, we can be with God forever!” on the whiteboard.

Display the Tearing the Curtain Slide and gather the kids. **Today we heard about the greatest act of love in history—Jesus' death on the cross. Sin—the wrong things people say and do—broke our relationship with God. Jesus loves us so much that He willingly died in a horrible way to fix our relationship with God! Does anyone remember what unusual**



**things happened at the moment when Jesus died?** Invite kids to share. **Yes! Just before Jesus died, the entire land was covered in darkness in the middle of the afternoon. Then the moment He cried out and breathed His last breath, the earth shook and the curtain in the temple tore in two.**

If you have a fabric window curtain, hold it up as you continue. **The temple was the place in Jerusalem where Jews went to worship God. The most inner room in the temple was called the Holy of Holies. It was an extremely sacred space that was considered the actual dwelling place of God's presence on earth. Only one person, the High Priest, was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies and only on one day each year. A special curtain, or veil, separated the Holy of Holies from other parts of the temple. This curtain was very large and very thick. It was made from the finest blue, purple, and red yarn. Scholars estimate that it was 60 feet high (about 18 meters), 30 feet wide (about 9 meters), and about four inches thick (10 centimeters)! Imagine trying to tear that curtain!**

Give a swatch of fabric (or half sheet of cardstock) to each kid. **The temple curtain symbolized the separation between God and people caused by sin. When Jesus died, the curtain tore in two!**

- **What do you think the curtain tearing in two might represent?** (Possible answer: Sin separated us from God. Jesus' death broke the power of sin, so we're no longer separated from Him. The curtain, which separated people in the temple from the place of God's presence, tore in two representing that the people can be with God again!)

Begin quietly playing music, such as "At the Cross (Love Ran Red)/The Cross Has the Final Word," from the [Created New Elementary Spotify playlist](#). Invite kids to spread out with their fabric (or cardstock) in hand. **As the music plays, I encourage each of you to think about the temple curtain. Close your eyes and image how high and wide and thick it was.** Pause as kids think quietly. **Now picture that thick curtain separating you and God like the sin that separated us from Him.** Pause for a few moments. **Because of Jesus' death on the cross, sin has lost its power! Now there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God! As you picture the temple curtain tearing in two, take your own fabric (or cardstock) and tear it in two!** Pause for kids to tear their fabric. If you have a fabric swatch, tear it now as well! **Together let's read the words on the whiteboard as a declaration: The curtain is torn! Sin has lost its power! Because of Jesus, we can be with God forever!**

Invite kids to take their torn fabric (or cardstock) home as a reminder that Jesus showed His love by dying for us. When we follow Him, we can have a relationship with the God of the universe!

**Leader Tip:** Some kids might be hearing the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection for the first time. This is a great opportunity to talk with them about the joy of following Jesus! Consider inviting their families as well as other ministry leaders into the conversation. Reference the Salvation Path resource for details and ideas.

## Blessing Your Kids

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** Crucifixion Blessing Slide

Close your time together by blessing the kids in your group. Display the Crucifixion Blessing Slide. Invite kids to hold their hands open in front of them with palms up as a physical sign that they're ready to receive a blessing from God.

**Blessing:** Because of Jesus, your sins are forgiven, and you can have a relationship with God ... forever! May you always remember that Jesus showed His great love by dying for you, and in Him, you are made new!

